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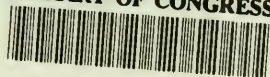


YUCATECAN SCENES AND SOUNDS



ALBERT KELSEY, F.A.I.A.

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For

Mr. C. E. Leland with the
best wishes of the Author—

JK—

Aug 4th 1919—

FINDS HE MADE JAZZ FENCE

Philadelphia Architect Hears Wash-
ington Guide Give Him Fame
Honor where honor's due.

There's an architectural tribute to
frenzied "kettle and pan" syncopation
in the capital city of the United States.

And Albert Kelsey, the Philadelphia
architect, during a recent trip to Wash-
ington, discovered he's responsible for
it. Here's the story:

A while back Mr. Kelsey designed
the Pan-American building in Wash-
ington. And one of the most delight-
ful features of it is the "Jade Fence,"
a low wall circling a fountain. The
wall is reminiscent of the picturesque
Aztec and is in rich green stucco with
a wealthy variety of color in terra cotta.

Mr. Kelsey was strolling over the
grounds yesterday when he happened
upon a group of sightseers trailing after
an official guide.

The guide was saying as he pointed
to Mr. Kelsey's jade fence:

"Ladies and gentlemen, to your right
you will observe the most distinctive
architectural gem in this city of beauty.
It is known to students of beauty and
to sculptors and architects as the
famous 'Jazz' Fence."

Mr. Kelsey is still chuckling.

YUCATECAN SCENES AND SOUNDS

An Address by
ALBERT KELSEY, F. A. I. A.
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Delivered before

THE NUMISMATIC AND ANTIQUARIAN
SOCIETY OF PHILADELPHIA'

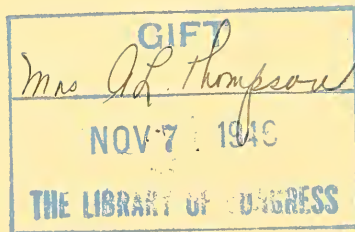
ON MARCH 18, 1918, PUBLISHED
SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH THE
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To the
HON. JOHN BARRETT
to whom I owe my introduction to Latin
America and to many distinguished
Latin Americans, this little
volume is inscribed.

May, 1919

“It is important, at the present time, to bear in mind that the human soul has still greater need of the ideal than of the real.

“It is by the real that we exist; it is by the ideal that we live. Would you realize the difference? Animals exist, man lives.”

—Victor Hugo.

*“Doubt not through the ages
One increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widened
With the process of the suns.”*
—Pope.

YUCATECAN SCENES AND SOUNDS

BY ALBERT KELSEY, F.A.I.A.

Delivered before the Society on March 18, 1918.

I went to Yucatan in quest of ideas and local color—not merely as a tourist but as an architect with a definite purpose. This purpose was to obtain ideas to be used in the embellishment and completion of the Pan American garden at Washington.

The Pan American buildings and their general garden layout had been designed and executed in collaboration with Professor Paul P. Cret, to whose skill and talent the success of the work is so largely due, and when our association, very much to my regret, came to an end, I was soon afterwards appointed permanent architect. In accordance with the original idea I resolved, provided funds were forthcoming as seemed likely, to make these buildings and grounds increasingly interesting and more and more reminiscent of the aboriginal art of the Western Hemisphere.

But while I had a clear and definite mission in making the journey, and while my ultimate destination was to visit Mr. William H. Thompson, the archaeologist, at his home in the ruined city of Chichen Itza, I nevertheless went my way eager and anxious to be diverted by anything and anybody, and out of my experiences come these random observations and stray fancies.

Fancy a rough bleak sea, fringed on its southern horizon with a line of tall palms threshing wildly above a row of low and colorful houses. Fancy also two or three great warehouses overtopped by a modern lighthouse. Then, by way of adventure, fancy (for all adventures are more or less fancy) several swiftly gliding sharks, an open boat, a rickety pier, a wet and dangerous landing; and presto! Mr. Charles Jones, the only other American in the boat, suddenly becomes Don Carlos "Hones"—a man of local importance, with even his name Yucatecanized.

All Progreso had come down to see the landing. The women wore beautiful single garments called "huipilleas" and the men were in tight suits with trousers belled at the feet. Everybody was in white. All were clean, gentle-mannered and kindly. Indeed, a kindly but not intrusive individual approached me at once.

"Do you speak English?" I asked.

"I do that," he replied with a grin, "for I've been Irish Consul here these twenty years."

"Then you can tell me where I can get some money changed," I continued, captivated by his brogue.

"Sure," he replied softly. "That Mestitzo over there is honest."

And thus, after such an official statement, of course I did not hesitate to hand the endorsed native a ten dollar bill, who in turn with equal frankness, produced a brand new pack of Carranza money from which he began to deal ten dollar bills back to me with the skill and ease of a card sharp. Soon the transaction took on an air of almost undue generosity, and so, when with evident reluctance the money-changer finally stopped at nine, I was so pleased that in observing how the honest Irishman's grin had broadened, I did not then realize why he, too, was so fully satisfied.

Ah! it's a happy, bountiful country, I mused innocently as a loose little train, without unnecessary haste or obvious ambition, drew puffily away from the angry Gulf of Mexico. Long after dark it deposited me in the Very Loyal and Noble City of Merida; a city, founded by the Spaniards in 1542, which within a generation became wealthy enough for both French and English pirates to loot, and even now so fabulously opulent that the newly-arrived governor's "voluntary loan" had been levied within forty-eight hours without that benighted official having at all suspected how far he had under-estimated its tempting possibilities.

Yucatan is the land of henequen. And henequen is hemp or the sisal cactus from which the best ropes and twines are made. It grows in limestone fields. In countless regiments its bristling plants flash their pointed blades at both the blistering sun and the stony soil as if defying both heaven and earth to kill them, but the hotter the sun and the worse the soil the better they grow. These plants bristle dangerously but how pleasantly they shine! They shine like a sea of silver, and like silver, or rather like a sea of well invested silver dollars, they pay regular dividends—dividends "beyond the dreams of avarice," daily dividends! for their leaves may be, and are, cut every day of the year!

From the car window these vast, level monotonous fields

looked just as they had looked when I had seen them seven years before, but the gayly lighted city seemed, on my arrival, to have somewhat changed. The lines of shade trees along its smooth, clean streets had grown and the little coaches, drawn by active little horses, each wearing a tinkling bell, though still mounted with brass plate and still studded with brass-headed nails were all painted black, while formerly many had been painted, if not indeed lacquered, in the brightest of colors. Yet in general the same comfortable and altogether happy air prevailed. Entire families were rocking in their own highly colored court yards, called patios, or in the wide archways leading to them. Masses of roses were blooming under the electric lights, nodding at and flirting with every passerby; great trailing bougainvillea vines crept and coiled in masses of delightful color, while here and there a pink poster peeped out from under a canopy of blossoms, and coquettishly announced a gala performance of the Opera. All of which, more vivid than a dream, together with the spicy intoxication of the soft evening air made it delightfully easy for me to fall into the pleasant ways of the tropics.

Is there among us one to whom such surroundings would not have produced the same effect? For whom the warning that a mere revolution was on would not have been completely forgotten as I forgot it? I think not. But, however that may be, I soon stood in front of the new and truly distinguished Peon Contreras Theatre, a monumental building designed like the lovely Mestitza costumes with a proper regard for climatic conditions. And though I was still in the street I could hear thro' the open doorways and slatted windows the refrain from *La Traviata*, and could glimpse up, over and far beyond the landing of the grand foyer stair within, the gilded proscenium arch and the upper part of brightly lighted stage scenery. How alluring!

Indeed it is a languorous land of happiness and plenty. Only in prosperous, pleasure-loving countries—only in Latin countries—is modern architecture enticingly conceived, I thought, as I ascended those wide marble stairs and passed with a light heart between two little soldiers who were standing at attention with drawn swords, thus adding emphasis, and dignity, and splendor to a fine interior. They wore pith helmets and were resplendent in fresh linen uniforms faced with green. They were very smart.

Could it be that once I had had to think before indulging in the expense of opera tickets? Could it be that only a few hours ago I had only just enough money for a modest journey? Strange! Yes, it was both strange and sudden, but I had no time to speculate, for in an instant I was in the pit of a great opera house containing no less than eighty boxes, each overflowing with vivacious Yucatecan ladies and gentlemen all in conventional evening dress, while above, among other men and women in street dress, I saw occasional Mestitzos and Mestitzas wearing the light and airy costumes typical of the country.

After the performance I strolled with the throng to a restaurant, which was so crowded when I entered that I was forced to ask leave of a Yucatecan gentleman to share his table. Gravely but courteously he bowed his acquiescence. I tried a few words of Spanish on the Mestitzo waiter without making myself understood; then French with equal futility; whereupon, smiling indulgently and with perfect breeding, my vis-à-vis asked in impeccable French, and with just a shade of gracious hesitation, if he could not be of assistance, and being assured that he could be of the greatest possible assistance he translated my order into Maya and in this way a pleasant acquaintance began.

At a little after the striking of one—and how tuneful the bells sounded!—we went out under the oleanders in the plaza. The stars were burning big and bright, the electric lights blazed joyfully; the blossoms smelt deliciously sweet and yet, wholly delightful as was this scene and wholly restful as was the lingering sound of the old clock bells, I nevertheless noticed that many of the blossoms were surrounded by pointed gray leaves fashioned like little daggers all bristling against a blue-black sky—a sky as soft and rich as velvet, and yet a sky too, that, nevertheless, somehow suggested a velvet glove holding the town tight in its iron grip. And then, just for an instant, I had a feeling of uneasiness for it seemed as if the very flowers had sought protection and that the town might be crushed at any moment, for I now recalled that I had been warned that the revolution was on! But such vagrant thought could not long withstand the charm of my companion's manner; the smiles on his bronzed face, his cordial courteous words and his smooth manner. How clever he was! How smooth! How charming! He handled his cigarillo like the true cosmopolitan that he was—everything he had to say was spoken gracefully and with knowledge of both

the Latin and the Anglo Saxon world. I can see him now as he drew himself up to his full height, standing in faultless evening clothes; with elegance and distinction, he clicked his heels together, removed his Panama, stretched out his right hand, grasped mine warmly and looking at me almost imploringly whispered with a tone of positive entreaty; "May I not do myself the honor of calling upon you in the morning, just for a little minute, to again press your hand?" And with an ample assurance on my part that he might (which by the way he never did), with Old World courtesy and with many bows and compliments on both sides, thus ended the first day of my second visit to Yucatan.

After a few shours sleep I was suddenly awakened by a clanging sound, a noise that pierced the darkness like the din of savage tribes engaged in battle. As I regained full consciousness I realized that it was merely the clanging of cracked church bells—bells ruined by modern bullets, defiant, decrepit, old bells resenting the recent exile of the Archbishop and most of the clergy! They rang for a long, long while and thus I had ample time to dress and sally forth to their sullen clashing—clink! clank! clang!

The big white stars still twinkled in the blue-black sky; the electric lights still blazed, and here and there an oil lamp was being relighted behind tall grilled windows. But all the lights had lost their warmth. The air was cold, or at least suavely cool, indescribably soft, inexpressibly caressing. And how can I describe that smell of damp flowers that was in the air—a spring fragrance one may enjoy at that hour, for an hour, every day of the year? It was deliciously sweet and alluring, inducing action and at the same time producing a sensation of rest and recreation. Is it any wonder then that before dawn, great throngs in white were drifting to market, or strolling to Mass, or is it surprising either that it should be the way of the tropics to rise early even after going to hammock late?

The smooth, clean streets soon swarmed with life, ease and contentment. Did no one realize that the revolution was on? Apparently not. So why should I? Were not the streets well lighted? And moreover I noticed that the paling stars disappeared long before the lights in the modern markets and ancient churches; so there was nothing to fear.

I discovered that anything could be bought at that early hour, from gorgeous fish to native jewelry. Before long the

dawn broke, broke in streaks more vivid than the iridescent colors on the dripping fish displayed for sale on the spotless sidewalks, more golden than the gold and gilt jewelry, holy medals and little saints flashing in many a market stall. It had become broad day when I passed under the arcades of the ancient hammock market, and had turned decidedly warm when I sat down to breakfast on the shady side of the patio of my hotel, and there peacefully and contentedly watched, first a great zopilote, a sort of buzzard, wheeling lazily in the deep blue sky and then my Mestitzo waiter, quietly preparing for me a succulent dish of cut-up oranges and red mamaye engirdled with crushed ice.

For several days I explored lovely Merida. In the evenings I would go out into the suburbs to watch the sunset—a sky of burgundy you would like to drink—and there enjoy likewise the rising of a lovely mist of amethyst; ascending mysteriously from limestone fields almost snow white—a mist, however, full of fever and ague if partaken of too freely, so I never lingered long.

The siesta hour of these days was hot—so hot and so still that not a blade stirred upon the great drooping palms nor a single fringe upon the more delicate and lace-like sea pines. Everything was still, quiet, absolutely noiseless and motionless! But nevertheless, before long, listening intently, I heard a strange shifting, sifting sound. At first it was almost inaudible, but looking down I observed a thin veil of sand undulating across my shoes. Its movement was uncanny and its voice was strangely still. I began to feel the presence of unseen things. Where were they? Where were they coming from? From the water caves, the dark mysterious zenotes that honeycomb the land, or was it merely a thin current of air coiling along the surface like a great almost invisible snake? I strained my ears and then I could clearly catch its voice, and oh, if I could only have understood its archaic whispering! If I could only have, then I would have become the envy of generations of truly serious and scholarly investigators, for then I should have learned the hidden secret of the ancient Mayas whose ruins I was soon to explore.

That whispering, whispering, whispering, which seemed always full of strange suggestions, not only did I frequently hear it in the sifting shifting sand, but late at night when no noise of street traffic or clanging of bells interfered I could then hear its ghostly murmur around the roots of shade trees—but then it was differ-

ent, quite different. Then it resembled the fairy-like trickling sound of a tiny stream of water, coming as I afterward learned, from a modern system of pipe irrigation, which nevertheless, carried its message up also from the underworld, from the place where the secrets of the Mayas still lie buried.

Just before dawn on the day of leaving Merida I found a great bustle in and about the St. Christobald station. Rich planters in immaculate duck and equally neat and attractive Mestitzos were starting off to their respective plantations. The wholly sanitary wicker-seated cars clanked and rumbled along merrily and soon it became light enough for me to see frequent groups of Indians, muffled to their eyes in pink and white striped serapes, plodding drearily to work. An hour or so after daybreak, tired of gazing at the interminable flat and waterless henequen fields I turned away and lost myself in my book. The next thing I knew I was alone! Looking out of the windows I saw that the train had stopped at a little station called Can-sah-cab. All the passengers but myself stood together on the platform, conversing in nervous tense whispers. My inquiries brought out the fact that the insurrectos had captured the next station. The Saint Jose Hacienda was in flames. Railroad communication had been interrupted. Troops had been telegraphed for. Oh, for the protection of that brave and honest Irish Consul! But in his absence I took comfort, none the less, in noting that the cantina, a modest little drinking place across the track, was called La Tranquilidad!

A few hours later an almost empty train proceeded and I went with it.

An anxious crowd composed mostly of Maya Indians crowded the bank forming the platform at Tzitas. It ignored me as did the Jefe Politico and the proprietors and loafers at the two primitive tiendas standing on the embryo plaza facing a big naked church. But at length (and what a long disquieting wait it was) a boy who declared himself indifferent to insurrectos and who spoke a clear staccato language full of z sounds, brought a horse and agreed to guide me to my journey's end. Hungry and tired I immediately struck into the woods the boy trotting ahead with my suit case on his back suspended in a sling passed across his forehead. We had eighteen miles to go through the wilderness, and soon I was surprised not to find the trees larger, though now and then a parasitic vine had singled out a great sabota and like a boa-constrictor was trying to strangle it, but for the most part

they were neither very tall nor very dense. Here and there gay orchids and dangling air plants grew high above my head, and as the primeval glory of the forest unfolded now and then a strange tropic bird or a gaily colored butterfly darted or fluttered by. At about four in the afternoon a frolicking flock of clouds laughed across the sky and it suddenly began to pour. But as the sun reappeared as quickly as it went its reappearance brought with it a fresh fascination for now the foliage of the forest was jewelled with diamonds, and the world once more was flooded with sunlight, which I noticed now frequently pierced through to the trail in wonderful semi-transparent barriers, or again in myriad blades and spears of gold, the latter suggesting a vision of magnificent Mayan pageantry—an apparition of a gorgeous archaic pilgrimage—a glittering cavalcade on its way to the Sacred Zenote of the mighty Itzas.

Night fell. How black a tropic night can be! How deep the silence! But soon the moon rose and we came to a little clearing, my horse and I, for the guide had at last dropped behind. On one side of the trail there huddled a short row of palm thatched hovels. The place was too poor for even a single light but, attracted by the clatter of my horses hoofs, in every open doorway I dimly saw a surprised and curious family—the whites of their big furtive, gentle, black eyes standing out with appealing distinctness. Inquiring the way, a man who did not venture to step out into the moonlight, answered wonderingly: “Directo, senor,” and we plunged into the woods again. Dark curtains of silence were ever opening stealthily before and always closing tightly behind me as I proceeded towards the great mystery, and I can assure you I did not feel that my chances of discovering the secret of ancient Mayas were at all good. Almost asleep in the saddle, seeing nothing, hearing nothing, I had reached a slight rise in the trail when suddenly the forest opened wide and there—dead ahead, solemn and pre-historic—stood the temple-crowned pyramid of Chichen Itza, a noble and impressive monument, a glimmering marvel in the moonlight.

No other sight could have moved me to the same extent.

Instinctively I straightened up in the saddle out of respect to its unknown architect, and in a moment stopped my horse to make quite sure that it was there and that I was not dreaming. Yes it was there, and gazing to the right and left I found that I was in the vast Ball Court. There was the Temple of the Jaguars

and El Caracol, while The Building with the Many Columns, The Nunnery, the House of the Dark Writings, and others I had read about, surely could not be far away. But El Castillo, as the great pyramid is called, was enough. It was simply staggering in its magnificence.

My boy caught up all too soon and trotted by without a glance at the mighty monuments erected by his remote ancestors. Awed and overwhelmed, I reluctantly followed through a short piece of woods by a wattled settlement, and in a moment found myself in the walled cattle yard or corral of an old Spanish plantation—back in comparatively modern times—back in the land of the living, where a bright light burned within a tall doorway, which opened out onto a great raised and arcaded porch. And though I was not expected, the first question Mr. Thompson asked was: "What news have you of the uprising?" while his second thought was to introduce me to Don Juan Martinez and his son.

Mr. Edward H. Thompson is a hospitable, rugged and resourceful New Englander who has spent over a quarter of a century in exploration work while Don Juan was the custodian of ruins, a native gentleman of many accomplishments, who upon acquaintance proved to be a scholar, an idealist and a man of vast spiritual energy, and who according to no less an authority than Dr. George Byron Gordon of the Archaeological Museum of the University of Pennsylvania, is the logical man to decipher the hieroglyphics and pictographs carved with orderliness and regularity on these, and on other ruins, in uncounted ruined Central American towns and cities—ruins, indeed, which simply reek with reptilian ornament of the sacred snake,—a distinct type of ornament which has been employed with great skill and endless variety. Sometimes, indeed, the entire form of a structure, as in the case of the House of the Snail or as in the undulations of the enclosing ridges of the terraced pyramid, is wholly reptilian. But I was, for the moment, interested more in the present than in the past, more in creature comfort than in conundrums, and hence gave my attention to my immediate surroundings.

The plantation house where Mr. Thompson still lived had been dismantled because of the general unrest. This fact made little difference to me, however, for I was requested to sleep in the "guest house." After a couple of hours under the lamp-

light, hours during which the moon had retired, I found it unpleasantly dark outside, and, escorted across the damp turquoise grass to a little hut in an orange grove, I felt as if I was being lured into the very heart of a deadly jungle, a feeling not a little uncomfortable. The hut was the "guest house." It was a palm-thatched, wattled room with double doors opposite one another and no windows. Therefore happy was I to have the company of my youthful guide, although alas! he soon indicated as he undressed (that is, removed his sandals) that it would be pleasanter to sleep with the doors wide open. And then I was *not* so happy, for I had not the courage to refuse, even though visions of snakes, jaguars, armadillos and hostile Indians began to swarm my brain, for we were on the very edge of the unsubdued region where wholesale massacres had taken place within comparatively recent times and moreover I might remark, quite incidentally, also, that the last two proprietors of this very plantation, together with their families had been massacred too. Finally, however, I fell asleep, dreaming uneasily of a fat tarantula up in the thatch right over my head and of several garapata burrowing under my skin, but when I awoke it was light, and I knew my fears to be groundless.

En deshabelle, I crossed to another hut there to enjoy a much needed shower bath. How good the water felt running down my spine! how refreshing! I stepped aside to soap myself all over and then the water stopped—stopped for good and all! Have you ever been in the Garden of Eden dressed only in a suit of soap? It's a queer sensation if you have not, especially as the soap begins to harden and you realize that you are in a waterless country. I went back to the shelter and tugged and pulled at the chain controlling the uncertain water supply but all in vain. Next I walked about the orange grove recalling a quotation from the Third Chapter of Genesis as I plucked an orange, and after the first bite, sauced with soap,—cast it from me righteously—for I was in a snaky country, and had read about the beguiling serpent. At length, after parading hither and yon much to the amazement of some Indian children, I found my boy at last, who hurried off to the Moorish noria (startling reminder of the Spanish Arabs) and soon returned with two buckets of water suspended from a coolie's yoke with which he doused me off, and then I put on some looser and more conventional garments and presented myself for breakfast.

So many competent authorities have described the ruins that I am going to describe merely the general aspect of the scene, which can be expressed by simply saying, a lot of grey piles scattered in the woods. Several of the units are large and impressive but the city is never visible as a whole. From the top of the monastery I sat alone one night in the strange tropical moonlight and gazed out over wave upon wave, and sea upon sea of tree-tops, with here and there a grey spot denoting one of the larger ruins, those masses being all that could be seen, yet somehow or other, the piles linked themselves together in my imagination and became a vast and impressive composition. But it was all imagination, nevertheless, for even from the top of El Castillo in broad day light, one gets no idea of anything but the immediate surroundings, and yet the dead city is two miles square.

I said I would only describe the general aspect of the place, but that involves an impression, so at the risk of being tedious, I must record my impression of its structures collectively.

It is an architecture brimming over with ideas—a purely indigenous architecture in which one central thought is brought out in a hundred different ways. In it associated ideas rich in implication and abounding in suggestion crowd one another, scene after scene, act after act, as if these story telling structures had stood all these years waiting to inspire some great composer—a magnificent background for an entirely new opera—and indeed, why not for a new Aida?

In some ways, the Sacred Zenote is the object of greatest interest at Chichen Itza, though except for its raised approach it is at present devoid of any trace of the handiwork of man. It is a pit over 200 ft. in diameter with a sheer drop of 70 feet to the surface of a pool the color of jade, and which unlike most zenotes is completely open to the sky—in fact, the only water open to the sky that I saw anywhere during my travels in Yucatan!

We are told that in the dim, dim past beautiful young maidens were cast into this pool to appease the anger of strange gods. Mr. Thompson explained with singular acuteness and charm that a great cortege led by priests in gorgeous feathered robes marched to the weird accompaniment of the twittering of flutes, the beating of tom-toms, and the jangle of brass against metal. "In a cloud of incense the drugged maidens were going joyously to their fate," he was saying and then in the next breath, coming back to Christian times he was telling how he once told a little priest

that he had removed the skeletons of ninety young virgins from this zenote, to which the "oily little man of God" remarked laconically, "it was a very foolish waste of virgins."

Space will not permit me to describe the Green Grotto nor even a single edifice, while a whole volume would be required to record my impressions of Chichen Itza. I must therefore hurry on to other scenes and sounds.

At the end of nearly a week, which took me constantly back to the far-off days of a little known civilization, but yet to one, little as it is understood, which was nevertheless a civilization of unquestioned authority and power, you may next think of modern me leaving Chichen Itza with Don Juan and his son in a volan.

A volan is a lumbering, primitive two-wheel vehicle no more comfortable to travel in than an army tank. Suspended between its two large wheels is a low hooded litter which sways and pitches back and forth as the heavy wheels grind and slip over uneven ledges and boulders, tossing one about in cozy confusion. I am told the very young prefer it to "buggy ridin." However that may be, I crawled in gaily, and in trying to be jocular, I called back to my host: "I feel like Montezuma," and he laughingly shouted after us as we lurched over the first ledge: "You'll feel like hell before you get to Tzitas." And so I did.

Merida, the beautiful, was simply enchanting in gala attire as I found it to be on my return. It had been transformed during my absence to celebrate the defeat of the United States! The ships had sailed away from Vera Cruz and all Mexico rejoiced. Unparalleled feats of valor had been reported, and Carranza had cabled "his" governor to spare no expense in celebrating the victory. You have seen many fêtes but never could you have seen a fiesta half so beautiful as this one. The Plaza de la Independencia was gay with bunting and paper lanterns in addition to the usual display of blossoms, while pink oleanders, green acacias and fiery hibiscus blooms tucked artfully in among the coils of hundreds of heads of blue-black hair or in some of the men's straw hats rivalled the larger clusters growing under electric lights against the soft velvet of the deep, blue-black sky. Hundreds of Mestitzas, arm in arm, three and four and even five abreast all garbed in snow-white hiupillias, richly embroidered and heavy with lace, were strolling around the band stand in one direction. Hundreds of mestizos in equally fresh, duck or linen

suits, were strolling, often hand in hand, around them in the other direction, while the *élite* in a double line, driven in open victorias, gay coaches and costly automobiles, slowly circled the outer rim of the Plaza in opposite directions, also, in order that they, too, might see and be seen; while still beyond, under the quaint, colorful and brightly illuminated arcades there was drinking and laughter. And over all this luxurious life the intermittent bursting of rockets enhanced the glory of the stars;—and over and above, below and among the big, soft, white stars was an infinite sky and an atmosphere like the breath of heaven. Flowers and fire works! cigars and cigarillos! music and *mestizas*, will I ever again know such a night!

The heavy sound of tramping men next added another note to the celebration. First it was tramp, tramp, tramp and then shuffle, shuffle, shuffle as the sandal-footed troops came on, bristling with flashing bayonets, which soon were gleaming under the trees all the way around the Plaza. Then followed a bombardment of Roman candles from the roof of the Jefatura which was answered by a counter-fire from the roof of the Cathedral opposite and finally both joined in a tremendous cannonading in which thousands of new stars and comets, the latter moving in gracefully arching orbits, met at the zenith, exploded, and fell hissing to the ground in a rich, warm rain of gold.

After the Ohs! and Ahs! from the crowd had subsided; softly and slowly, almost inaudibly, the band started to play *La Golandrina*—the plaintive good-night song of Mexico. But no one sang. Strange to say its heart-throbbing music induced no such demonstration. On the contrary everyone gradually became absorbed in his or her own private thoughts. What was a revolution and the ending of a little war with the Gringos compared with what they were thinking of? And yet they had to keep tune. It was involuntary. So gradually, as the music melted into the scented air, I could hear a soft swish of silk *rebosos*, a tuneful cadence from high-heeled sandals, and as the last extreme of the melody was reached, mingling with both, a sound of rhythmic breathing which came equally from the men moving in one direction and the women moving in the other, and which increased in suppressed intensity as the dreamy melody brought the right couples mysteriously together in the all-satisfying realm of its own grand finale. And thus ended another day filled with ideas and local color, a garden scene I could never hope to reproduce.

A few hours later the leaders of the insurrection were standing in front of a blank wall: you might have heard a crash of musketry and then in a few minutes you might have seen the sun once more beginning to smile on lovely Merida through streaks of blood. But why dwell upon blood, terror and tears when everything else in nature and town was so beautiful?

Notwithstanding incidents of this kind, Merida is a cosmopolitan forward-looking place. The city is to Yucatan what Paris is to France. All the patriarchal life on her scattered, vast plantations is centred and modernized there, and moreover when Merida has been allowed to govern herself she has demonstrated her ability to deal both wisely and honestly with vast civic problems. The modernizing of Merida, for example, with the eradication of yellow fever and a partial extension of her system of education were achievements of the first magnitude that but few of the best governed cities of the world have ever surpassed, but unfortunately she is not always permitted to be self-governing, and hence "voluntary loans" and other autocratic demands, with "fuselado" as the probable alternative, have a tendency to make life there a little volatile.

But on the other hand being considerably over a century older than Philadelphia, Merida has had time to travel and learn. Allow me to illustrate. A native gentleman who speaks four languages fluently—a rich amateur using the word in its french sense, was showing me a few of his treasures. We were in the library of his town house. "The only other copy of this book is in the British Museum," he remarked unostentatiously. Or again, in his lofty dining room as we were passing a cabinet he remarked quite simply: "those are sample plates from sets of china made in Dresden, Dalton, Limoge, etc., during the past two hundred years for different branches of my family. Or once still again, Don Juan took me to another and an even larger house, where we asked permission from its owner to spend a night at one of his distant haciendas. He was a smartly-dressed, alert, soft-voiced, exquisite and urbane young man who spoke English perfectly. "When do you go?" he asked as if we were going to our own and not his hacienda.

"With your favor, we start tomorrow," said Don Juan.

"Go when you like," said the young hacendado, making an obeisance.

"Mil gracias, Senor," said Don Juan.

"A thousand thanks," I echoed, and then with a bow that was magnificent he bowed us out into a great stone-vaulted corridor, having just time as he recovered his erect posture to exchange smiles and familiar finger twiddling with Don Juan, before an Indian servant clanged one fold of the high, heavy, old door against the other, leaving us in the patio to listen to the echoes of echoes born in Spain when new Grenada meant virtually the whole western world and Yucatan in fact a seigneurie. The haciendado was, I think, the owner of pre-historic Uxmal.

At any rate his country seat, and it was only one of them, when we reached it the following afternoon turned out to be enormous and truly grand. There must have been at least nine lofty arches across its front, supported on slender columns. Unfortunately the house was dismantled and deserted. However, the fat little major domo, or plantation manager, who lived nearby, was most anxious to make us comfortable in one of its vast dusty apartments, and by way of further sociability had his own dinner table set out in the cattle yard in our honor—doubtless neutral territory, belonging neither to his humble home nor to the grand plantation house itself.

We sat down in the gloaming, the three of us, and soon two little children came up and were presented to me in Spanish. By the employment of the international sign language, which consisted first of pointing his three fingers towards heaven and secondly of rolling his eyes slowly and sadly in the same direction—tragic acting!—supplemented at length by the solemn and doleful ejaculation, "morte," I gathered that the plump little father had once had three other children who, alas! had left him for another world.

A big Peruvian ranchero wearing a sombrero, a gaudy shirt, long leather leggings but no coat, waited on the table. In lighting a tall lamp he disclosed dishes and pans filled with highly spiced stews, bottles of beer, and warm canned butter from Denmark. He was attentiveness itself, running back and forth, plying us with food and drink; and as the meal stretched on lengthily, now and then a couple of curious but friendly mules would amble up, and once when one came close to my chair, the considerate Peruvian, who happened then to have a plate on edge in each hand batted the inquisitive animal over the rump with one of them, and then laid it gleaming white and hairy before me with ceremonious grandeur?

The following morning we were up before the sun. Lolling on a litter strewn with fresh ramon leaves, in a clean volan drawn by three little mules, we were driven to Uxmal by an obliging Indian. The cold dreary landscape was just beginning to stand out in sharp silhouette, as we left the plantation. Five spectral bells in two tiers, each depending from its own little stone open archway, caught the first rays of the rising sun, while beyond two black spots perched on the twisted limb of a guant, dead tree came to life lazily against a background of burnished gold. I stretched myself too, as they opened their damp wings to dry, and like those zopolite I too longed for warmth, though before long it was quite warm enough. On our way we passed through a few half abandoned henequin fields and by a tousled, thatched hut, and just beyond that a squaw returning from some hidden zenote bearing a canteros of water. She was followed by two beautiful little children wearing holy medals around their necks and so little else as to leave no doubt as to their sex.

In this connection it may be of interest to note that in this hot zone, as in other regions of Latin America, but few of the parents of the pretty little Indian children are married, nor do the upper classes, for the most part, think that it matters. An amusing exception, however, is recorded in the case of an old Spanish lady who after some years abroad, returned convinced that it was her sacred duty to have those on her own plantation formally united. Accordingly she began by talking the matter over with one of her old house servants, a middle-aged flabby soul, asking what arrangements she would like to have made for the wedding.

"I would like to have a pretty veil," said the radiant bride-to-be, at once picturing herself as the dominant figure in a beautiful religious pageant.

"You shall have a beautiful veil, little Maria Jesus. Is there anything else?" inquired the good lady with a mingling of motherly solicitude and solemn piety.

Overjoyed and encouraged by her first success, the betrothed thereupon dropped upon her plump knees and exclaimed: "If Doña Gil Blas de Santillana will permit it, by all that is holy, I beg that I may be permitted to have my four daughters for bridesmaids."

Without showing the least astonishment her mistress replied devoutly: "As heaven has deigned to bless you with four daughters I will not object, it will be a blessing from God."

And accordingly in a few days the four girls followed their parents up the chapel aisle, one of them positively enraptured, as she carried her own child astride her hip, knowing full well that before long she, too, would be wearing a pretty veil on an equally grand occasion.

This may seem a little naïve and unconventional to you, but it must be remembered that these furtive-eyed peons are but children and that even the old men among them have their *compadres* to whom they go regularly for comfort and advice.

Uxmal has no Sacred Zenote and in other respects is second to Chichen Itza, though to me it proved quite as interesting, perhaps because more ruined buildings could be seen at once from the summit of its twin pyramid, and also perhaps, because they are grouped upon a more orderly plan.

A typical structure in either city, or for that matter in a score of other places, at first glance recalls the sculptured ruins of Indo-China or Java, but upon closer observation one finds the Maya to be a much more highly conventionalized art. Indeed it is as carefully conventionalized, as highly emotional, as wonderfully imaginative, as poignantly inspiring, as any architecture in the world. One hesitates to use the word spiritual for fear of being misunderstood, but from the Maya point of view, it was preeminently spiritual, poignantly poetic, magnificently intellectual.

You must not forget that something more than centuries separates us from the ancient Mayas. And I did not forget, for in that dazzling December sunlight I tried to surrender myself to their point of view; tried to forget the imagined superiority of our own restless skyscrapers, congested cities and flimsy half-hearted churches, for those ancient Maya buildings each had four finished elevations, which alone impressed me mightily; while most of them stood upon special terraces, and all had a wonderful air of sublime calm—a severe calm and a fine presence. This is majesty.

The sardonic words of Pugin, the great Gothic architect, came rushing to my mind:

“They built a kirk upon the strait
Like auld Westminster Abbey
Then they thought the Lord to chate
They built the back part shabby.”

"Yes, we can certainly do *that* sort of thing better nowadays" I mused. Then I thought of Macaulay's New Zealander on the ruins of London Bridge, and congratulated myself heartily on having something infinitely superior to contemplate. Neither London nor New York, even with their structures at their very best, let alone in ruin, could possibly evoke such awe-inspiring feelings as these mighty ruins.

Their infinite repose recalled the architecture of ancient Egypt; but it is a much more savage and a much more modest architecture. In its embellishment, for example, the human form is nearly always subordinated to the super-human serpent, while in Egypt, as far as I can recall, the human form is nearly always dominant—the man in the beast is always the directing force. Compare for instance the reptilian Turtle of Quirigua with the human Colossi of Memnon. There is repose and dignity in those great seated figures facing the river Nile, but in the jungle-ridden Turtle there is life!

Moreover throughout Central America, it seems to me that the modest Maya has left many strange forms vibrant with life more than any carvings I know of in Egypt. True, many are not very large, delicate or subtle, certainly not so fine as the sensitive incised pictographs and ideographs of Egypt, but to me they represent an energy, an eloquence, a coiling, biting, squeezing force combined with an inscrutable repose, a calm in which strength is not relaxed (so typical of the snake they worshipped) that I could think of nothing more sublime (of course, having drifted back in spirit to the Maya cycle, uninfluenced by winged and haloed human forms, where I was able to think in terms apart from the Christian era). Moreover, it has become my belief that without such a sense of detachment it is quite impossible to understand or appreciate an art that springs from an ardent belief far stronger and more consuming than that which rears our flimsy places of worship today. Therefore as an impartial architect, I ask you to look though my archaic lenses—barbarous lenses if you will—look at the well-balanced facades of Uxmal. From a purely modern, academic point of view they defy criticism; their unknown architects' sense of dignity and scale was marvelous! Note, for instance, how well the individual stones are bonded into the walls and yet how the vast reptilian design pierces and penetrates that very wall, twining and intertwining along its length in a manner that makes it quite impos-

sible to say which is pure ornament and which the supporting structure itself. Surely there is no architecture in the world at once so highly conventionalized and so replete with meaning. (So bedeviled with strange deities, if you still cling to your own era, and its limited horizon!) No architecture in which a consistent theme has been adhered to and worked out in every detail with such imaginative skill and ardent belief; super-ardent is not too strong a term to coin for the occasion. They believed in the serpent, those barbarous founders of the Maya Empire. It was an all-divine concept to them and not a "*me und Gott*" working agreement presided over by men masquerading as angels and seraphs.

From the great terraced pyramid at Chichen Itza, marked by nine undulations in the bodies of the four great serpents stretching from its top to its base, representing the nine divisions of the Maya calendar, down to the richly intricate mouldings in many dark vaulted interiors the rattles, fangs and teeth of snakes have been conventionalized and used, as I have said before, with marvelous skill and knowledge—serpents single and intertwined, feathered serpents and scaly serpents have been used in endless variety with here and there other forms, often human, but only introduced as mere accessories. "What does it all mean? How are we ever going to learn its full significance?" I asked Don Juan, and he replied with a wise smile:

"Ask the snakes."

It is quite true that the Mayas were better designers than builders, better sculptors than architects, but as artists recording their ideals in an entirely germane and indigenous manner their work has probably never been excelled. As yet we may only guess at the deep significance of their work; it is like hunting for hidden springs in the bottom of zenotes, but its weird, massive repose, its surprising variety of form and its richness of composition, often quite academic, makes it, if not altogether beautiful to blind, heedless modern eyes, yet truly wonderful to any impartial and thoughtful observer.

You may go deep into the legends and mythology of the Mayas and learn little. At first glance you see it all, like exploring a zenote, but in both cases the little you actually see the more your curiosity is excited. The deeper you look the more mysterious and interesting it becomes. And even then you gain no true perception, and thus, if you venture to talk upon what

you may have glimpsed or guessed and more particularly if you venture to write down your hurried observations as I am now doing you are almost sure to be accused of describing something unreal if not positively false.

So here goes: believe it or not as you choose. My curiosity had been excited and I could not leave Yucatan without trying to learn the secret of its ancient people. I knew those secrets were concealed somewhere underground, while I likewise knew that under a modest little barber shop on Sixty-first Street, in the city of Merida, there was a zenote as small or as endless as I cared to make it.

"But we do not bathe in zenotes at night,"—the barber tried to make me understand; "it is very dark down there," he explained by closing his eyes tight and pressing his hands over them with a shiver. "*Mañana*," he coaxed, opening his hands and eyes suddenly, followed by an enticing smile.

Undiscouraged I waved my towel bravely and made swimming motions in the air above his greasy head. But he remained obdurate, so I departed but soon returned with two fat little soul-candles—the kind that are burned at the head and foot of a coffin—and after showing them to him to the accompaniment of a lavish jingle of coin, he relented saying: "*Todos somos locos, los unos de los otros*," and ordered his boy to show me the way. I followed wondering what "*locos*" meant. I said: "*mil gracias*."

With a lighted candle I followed my dusky torch-bearer out into the dim back yard and down a steep rock-cut flight of steps. Down, down, downward we went into the bowels of the earth, countless steps multiplying in the darkness ahead of us—they were, however, broken before long at a landing which suggested a rude pulpit in a cavernous cathedral. It was an observation point worthy of Dante and Virgil, while ahead was the reflection of countless steps penetrating fathomlessly into the kind of world Gustave Doré used to like to illustrate. Turning I saw that the real steps continued their descent to the right and left going towards the remote and dismal ends of a vast subterranean horseshoe.

Making a sign to the boy to remain with his light on the landing I descended to the left—Down, down, downward again I went until I found myself on a limestone ledge raised only a few inches above the glassy surface of the water.

Having still some human instincts left I discreetly glued my candle on to a shelf of rock, as high above the youngster's reach as possible, and without further precautions undressed and plunged in.

Under water I quickly crossed the gulf that separates modern from pre-historic Yucatan and when I reached the surface I was in the ancient cosmos. I felt the way men felt eons ago when reptiles were dominant and men were modest. Filled, therefore, with diffidence and modesty, it naturally pleased me immensely to be received at once by two golden serpents who had the manners of courtiers, and it was nice also to feel that they did not regard me either as an interloper or as an inferior.

As I swam on swiftly they coiled gracefully over the waves I made, and in the friendliest fashion led me into a dark cave where at first I could see nothing, and moreover where pausing to listen I could hear nothing save the lapping of little waves against unseen walls. However, face downward I was surprised to find that it was not at all dark beneath me, as a subdued radiance shone up through the clear water from a phosphorescent bottom disclosing a couple of sightless fish gliding about serenely some ten or fifteen feet below, while, listening intently, a strange orchestration like the reverberations in a great shell lured me on. It was like bathing in a halo.

Head up and swimming around a bend I saw that I was being led to a great city swarming with life and humming with industry. The city stood in a waterless country. It was spacious, opulent, grand and monumental. "What supports such a population? What keeps those people alive?" I said to myself quite mystified.

"Why, the pure water from the zenoties, physically, and their faith, spiritually," one of the serpents answered instantly, much to my surprise.

How on earth, or how under the earth, had he guessed? I supposed I had been only thinking. At any rate he made me feel in some intangible way the magic of his prescience, and that I myself had gradually and insensibly changed. Above all he encouraged me to believe that my zeal was being rewarded. I was swimming in a heart-changing, eye-opening bath—in an illuminated bath, and beneath its waters, still further underground, there was light! The spell of the serpent was upon me—what, I wondered, is that sweet and distant music?

But without waiting for me to recover from my surprise and not giving me time to frame a question, the other snake, who as yet had said nothing, proceeded with a knowing smile.

"Watch their leaders, for we shall pass near to them though they will not see us. Watch their priests, their men of genius, imagination and intellect. Watch their sculptors, their workers in precious metals and in wonderful, beautiful jade. Note that they sing as they work. Yes, now watch those two, over yonder, working in blue-hued jade. Note the patience, the care and the enthusiasm with which they work."

"Why did he stress the arts I wondered? They both knew my mission. Instinctively they divined everything."

"Their lives," he went on with a comprehensive sweep of his long shiny neck and pointed flat head, "are not spent like yours" (what could he know of mine?) "in a state of flux. They are steady and staunch. They have steadfast ideals and hence their work illuminates and beautifies their lives. They know how to express their emotions in their art, and hence their art is not copied—is not a reflection of other people and other times—but is a sincere and ardent expression of their own lives. Indigenous and modern, it gives them peace and happiness."

Seeing that he paused for an answer and beginning to feel a little apprehensive, I replied, trying to appear at my ease; "the wisdom of the serpent indeed!" but my attempt at graceful flattery failed miserably.

"What they," emphasizing the personal pronoun with unpleasant distinctness, and ignoring any views I might have had, "work for that they believe in, and hence it is spiritually worth while," he continued haughtily, gazing at me hard to see if I had followed his full meaning.

Being uncertain whether I had or not, and wondering whether he was not getting ready to frighten or insult me, I turned on my back in an attempt not to appear too much impressed and gazed up above; but there, much to my regret, I did not find the simple rocky surfaces I had hoped to rest my eyes upon while I might steal a moment to think the situation over; on the contrary with new clairvoyant eyes I detected above me a depth and subtlety that was simply indescribable. There was no mistaking it. Everything overhead was serpentine. I was surrounded and overwhelmed by the magic of the snake! I saw it all! I had been led into this water-cave to be taught a lesson. And that

lesson was that I should be made to feel the power of the super-human serpent.

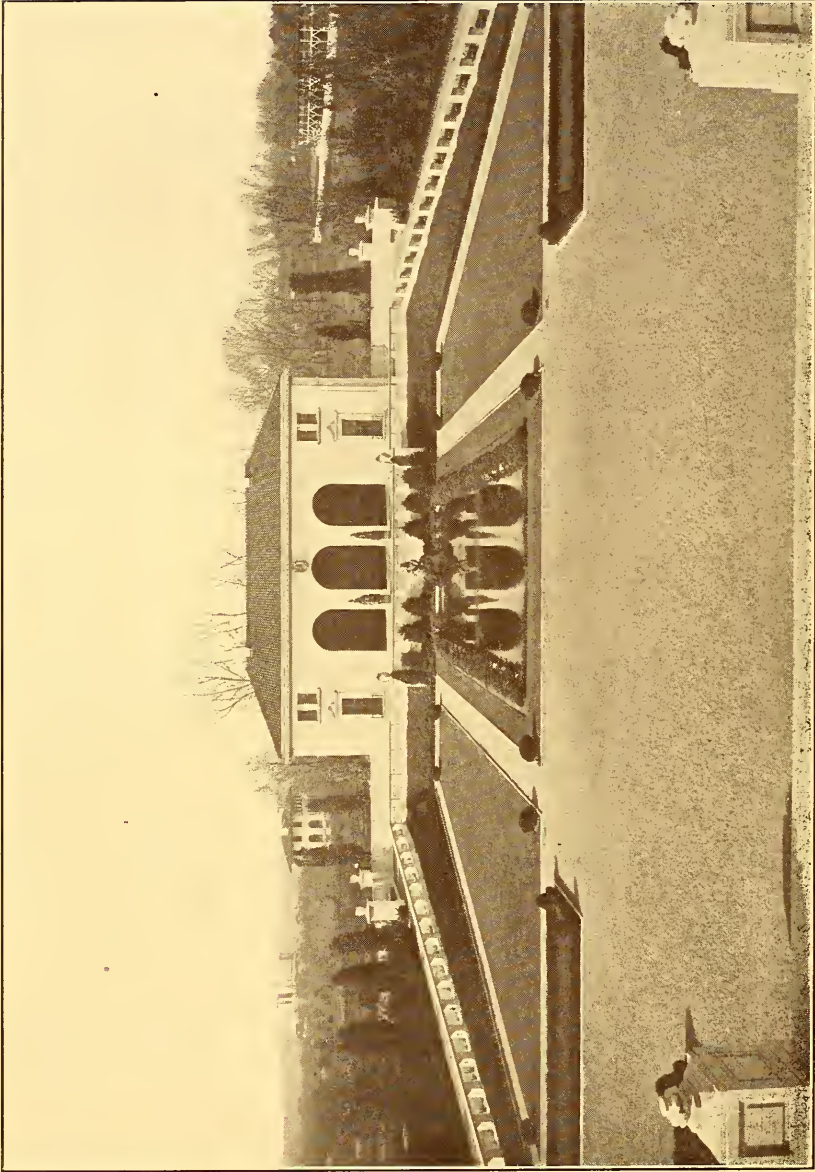
Never had I seen such vaulting. There were fascinating, coiling, constricting, pulsating lines in every rib and every web of groining, while some of the forms and surfaces were delicately edged with milky-blue, creamy-purple and chalky-green like old jade, and strange beyond the imagination of man.

Why, they were making me see through their own lenses! They were endowing my surroundings with a strange enchantment! And it was being done to outwit me! As I turned on my chest and struck out again I felt possessed, and knowing that some reply was expected, in my fright, and with my faculties over-strained, I could only mutter; "Yes" and that without a particle of combative force or pride. He had me!

"Art may spring from any civilization," he proclaimed harshly, in a tone which implied that upon him alone depended my life or death, "even yours; but a rare and vital art like this must be lived to become a sincere reflection of the life of a people."

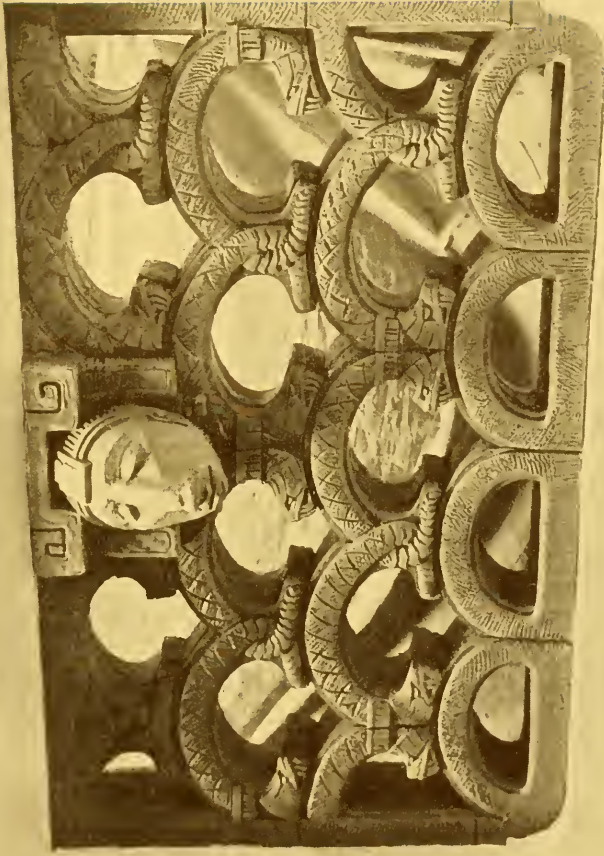
"Surely," I responded even more weakly than before. I was terrified. I had had enough and wanted to escape, but he held me with blazing eyes which were now as cruel as his drooling jaws.

"They," he preached at me categorically, "have selected the serpent for their guide in life and it thus follows logically as their motif in art." I devoutly hoped that he was through but he was not. After a dreadful pause he continued "Atlas, bearing the world, stands upon a turtle which in turn is supported on a serpent. Remember that—on a serpent;" and having said these words, he looked sternly at me, and began to withdraw in an overpowering, lofty and imperious manner. His companion, who had adopted a supercilious air, withdrew also and was soon out of sight, enabling me to keep my eyes now riveted solely on the speaker who quietly wriggled off in great broken undulations, which became less and less distinct as the water flattened out. They—the broken parts of him—undulated and zig-zagged over the surface in golden z's, fading away smaller and smaller, and becoming more and more detached as they receded. And finally with the last z which illuminated a flash of cruelty in his eyes and a mocking smile upon his ugly flat face, he vanished leaving, for just an instant, a tiny zero on the surface above his head thus making it doubly clear that he had been mocking me—tan-



THE PAN-AMERICAN GARDEN
ALBERT KELSEY AND PAUL P. CRET,
Associate Architects

From a groove under the marble rail, concealed green lights will cast a soft eery radiance down through the blue tracery.



Model of one of the fifty-four panels of the
JADE FENCE

The Pan-American garden, Washington, D. C.

JOSEPH BASS, Sculptor

ALBERT KELSEY, Architect

J. H. DULLES ALLEN, Potter

talizing me with an enigma and that now he wished me to fully realize that his complete disappearance, was as positive and final as the last letter of the alphabet.

All was now dismal, black and empty, and yet I was glad, you may be sure, to be alone even though I could see nothing in the inky blackness ahead of me, and even though I still clearly heard the unpleasant words, "on a serpent" echoing abysmally ever fainter and fainter in a series of derisive octaves.

He had gone. I was becoming myself again. But he might attack me from below!

Chills began to course up and down my spine. The liquid halo turned to hell-broth.

Scalding and quivering with fear I struck out madly—madly and desperately making the water hiss and sizzle as I surged and splashed through it.

After an eternity—how I struggled! I came panting within sight of the flickering candles.

Exhausted I turned on my back. I began to breathe more easily. And gradually, floating out of the darkness, little by little, regained my composure.

It had all been tremendously real. Vibrating with excitement I began quickly to review what I had learned.

"Well!" I said to myself, much relieved and half resigned; "I have spoken with a jealous god, a shining spirit of good or evil, who conducted me to his sacred shrine and there deigned to give me just a hint of what lies back of Mayan art—a hint, moreover, that fully confirms my own ideas, and if he did not tell me what neither Don Juan nor Mr. Thompson could tell me, namely, who were the ancient Mayas? where did they come from? and what does their strange art mean? at least in the sub-lactereine light of his zenote I have seen and heard enough to give me a good idea."

"Once more I am reminded, 'that it is not the guilt that makes the god but the worshipper;' once more I am reminded what architects were and may become again; once more, and for the thousandth time, I am reminded what clients were and may be, when I think of the patience, the sympathy, the understanding and the consistent and untiring devotion to an ideal always displayed by Secretary Root and Director Barrett when anything was suggested to add character, meaning and power to the Pan-American theme. Yes," I said to myself, quite happy



Center motifs for two panels of the
JADE FENCE

The upper one is a reproduction of the well-known, Long-Nosed God found in Yucatan and the lower an adaptation from a Jaguar Head on a Disk Shaped Stone found in Salvador.

The first finished samples of these modern adaptations were made at the Enfield Pottery & Tile Works, in turquoise blue with an antique finish, but later specimens made by the same firm have had the blue slightly fused with emerald and amethyst and high lighted with just a suggestion of reddened gold, thus making them quite unique as objects of ceramic art. Both Mr. Bass, the sculptor, and Mr. Allen, the potter, have entered into the spirit of this unusual undertaking with the utmost intelligence and enthusiasm.

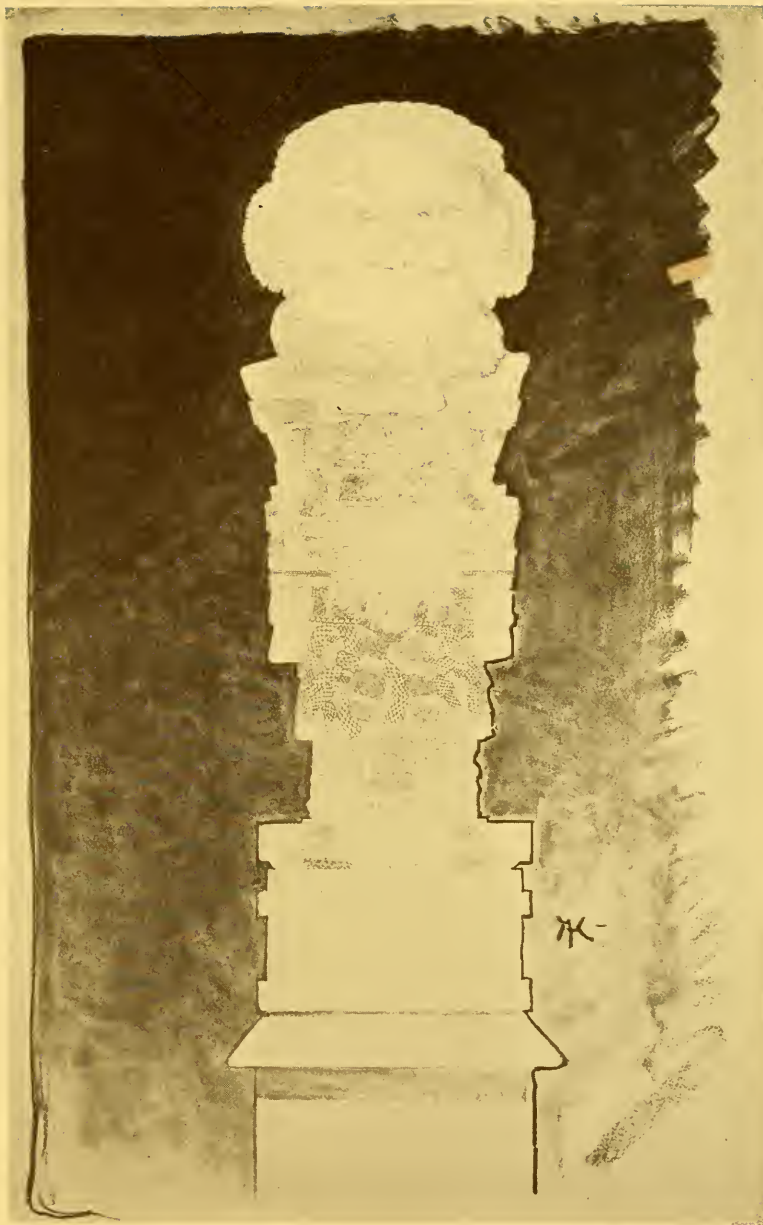


again, "I will go them with this new idea confident of their support."

Slowly and thoughtfully I swam through the shadowy, vaulted aisle back into the welcome candle-light, where with obvious light above me and mysterious light beneath me, I turned that idea over and over in my mind. To be sure, the phantom city and its spirit art-workers had vanished, and my sinister guides, thank the Lord, had vanished too; but I had nevertheless gotten what I had come for—an entirely new theme for the embellishment and enrichment of the Pan-American Garden.

"Yes! I have accomplished what I came for," I said to myself, feeling proud now that I had made good my escape. "I've got an idea that will make the Pan-American Garden unlike any other garden in the whole wide world!" I exclaimed aloud, and hurried to describe it in English to the boy who had been patiently waiting for me, candle in hand, high on the rock-cut stair. "I will finish," I rushed on, "the empty panels in the marble fence that is now there with a reptilian design full of forms suggesting strange memories and queer experiences, and it shall be a pierced illuminated design to glow at night—all in jade;—in azure terracotta made to look like jade—milky blue fused with green and lavender. Its panels shall each be different, while the series—harmonized and conventionalized—shall reproduce a host of Maya forms, a veritable museum of aboriginal art, and above all, I will strive to make it a museum showing what the Mayas loved and how they were dominated, fascinated and hypnotized—in short an out-of-door museum of the snake-worshippers art! It can be done. And how better indeed can I suggest their belief, illusions, dreams, then by illuminating my reproductions of their idols in a strange and subtle manner;—mysterious and eerie, like the light arising from the bottom of this zenote. Ha, ha! I've got it;" I exclaimed with increasing enthusiasm, "and thus it shall be made more alluring, more interesting, more eloquent, more beautiful by night than by day—interior illumination—soul, as the divines say!"

The boy peered down at me in astonishment, and doubtless recalling what his father had said, in trying to induce me to postpone my swim, shook his head sadly at me, as people do to those who are locoed. But I only laughed, and thus occupied;—floating idly on my back, with my ears under water, I soon found myself



Design for one of a pair of terminal features to end the
JADE FENCE

Lights concealed beneath the head dress will throw a green glow down around the face and out through the eyes of the figure. As in the intervening panels of the marble fence, this composition will be executed in jade-colored, hand-made terra cotta.

This monstrous composition is composed of two motifs the Serpent-Skirted Goddess—a stone statue found in what is now Central Mexico, and being “one of the most striking examples of barbaric imagination,” to quote Spinden; on whose head, formed by two serpents’ heads meeting end to end, is seated a reproduction of a figure from a terra-cotta Zapotecan Funerary urn found in the modern state of Oaxaca. Spinden states that “the Zapotecan Indians attained to a high degree of civilization, but a study of their art shows that they were greatly indebted to the Mayas for decorative motifs.” A study of this particular face suggests that they might also have been greatly indebted to the late “T. R.”

drifting opposite, and almost under the aperture through which I had come down.

And there, gazing up and out into the tropic night—far, far beyond either modern or prehistoric Yucatan, I beheld with a feeling of gladness, increasing to genuine triumph, the same stars that were then looking down upon you. And it was good—how good it was! to change guides—snakes for stars—and thus guided—all danger over—to feel and to know that I would soon be back with you in the land of practical reality where dreams are supposed to dissolve and fade away, and yet where despite this too popular belief, some golden dreams, when properly nourished, crystallize—aye, and in a very glowing sense, not only do they crystallize and come true, but as true and tangible realities, if sufficiently beautiful, often become inspirations, joys—and joys that last forever.

